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It’s important that we continue our efforts to drive numbers down so that we do not move into a higher tier should lockdown end on 02 December.  We know these measures are tough, especially as we have moved into colder, darker weather, the national measures coupled with your continued efforts should hopefully see these figures dropping over the coming weeks.  [You can view the latest district figures on Leicestershire County Council's website.](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-data-for-cases-in-leicestershire)  Our Covid Marshals have been out and about in the district and we are pleased to say that they have reported only a small number of incidents to our Environmental Health teams. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Garden Waste services suspended**  We are having to suspend out garden waste collection for two weeks from Monday (16 November) due to staff shortages as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.  A number of the waste collection crew are required to self isolate as part of the national test and trace effort. As a result, we have taken a decision to suspend the garden waste collection service for a two week period from Monday 16 to Friday 27 November 2020.  Refuse and Recycling collections will continue as normal.  [See more information about the suspension on our website.](https://www.blaby.gov.uk/your-council/news-and-awards/news/garden-waste-collections-suspended/) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Covid-19 test centre in Narborough**  A temporary Covid-19 walk-in test centre will be set up on the Visitors Car Park at Blaby District Council’s Offices on Desford Road in Narborough.  Managed by Department of Health and Social Care and their contractors, the centre will remain in place for six months, although this may be extended depending on local testing need.  The walk-in test centre will operate from 8am-8pm seven days a week and offer vital testing capacity locally.  As tests are offered by appointment only, the number of people on the site at any one time is always limited.  If you have symptoms of Coronavirus, you can book a test by calling 119 or visiting www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.  If you have symptoms or tested positive you must self isolate for 10 days.   Testing at the site is expected to begin from Friday 20 November.  [Find out more about the centre on our website.](https://www.blaby.gov.uk/your-council/news-and-awards/news/test-centre-comes-to-narborough/) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Business Grants**  We are once again helping businesses in the district access the Government’s business grants for those who were forced to close from 05 November.   These grants of up to £3,000 are for businesses who are registered for Business Rates and have been forced to close.   Grant levels available (per 28-day qualifying restriction period):   * A rateable value of £15k or under – Grant of £1,334 * A rateable value between £15k-£51k – Grant of £2,000 * A rateable value of £51k or over – Grant of £3,000   To find out if you may be eligible and to complete an application form [visit the website.](https://www.blaby.gov.uk/business-licensing-and-investment/business-rates/reliefs-and-exemptions/)  **Planning proposal comments submitted** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | The government is proposing changes to the planning system to streamline and modernise the planning process.  As part of the consultation on the proposed changes we have urged the government to ensure any changes to the planning system are thoroughly scrutinised.  The full proposals introduced by the Government can be [read on their website](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future).  We’ve sent our comments back to the Government on their proposals, which include:   * Highlighting that any reduction of affordable housing will have a significant impact on young people seeking to secure housing, or get on the housing ladder for the first time * Supporting the principle of making “faster and more certain decision making.” However, we want to ensure that local residents still have an opportunity to have their say on any potential development.   [Find out more details by visiting the website.](https://www.blaby.gov.uk/your-council/news-and-awards/news/planning-proposal-comments-submitted/)  **Help us prioritise to 2024**  Our [current plan of priorities](https://www.blaby.gov.uk/strategies-and-plans/corporate-plans/corporate-plan/) to improve services and ensure our district is a great place to live, work and visit is coming to an end, and we want your help to shape the next one.  The Blaby Plan 2021-2024 will be the backbone of what we want to achieve for the three years its in place. You can have your say by filling in our five-minute survey about what is important to you.  [Take the survey now before 11 December.](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BlabyDistrictPlan21-24Survey)  **Community Grants**  The next round of Community Grants closes on Friday 25 November. This year we're offering additional support to groups who have been directly affected by the pandemic. There is also more flexibility in how your funding can be spent.  Grants of up to £4,000 are available for community groups. Find out if you're eligible and apply online before the closing date on our [Community Grants page.](https://www.blaby.gov.uk/leisure-health-and-community/community/community-grants/)  **Flytipping and Enviro-crime** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | From flytipping to littering, abandoned vehicles to flyposting, our new Enviro-crime officer will be dedicated to tackling these issues across our district. They have been targeting flytipping hotspots in the area already and welcome your help as we look to combat this blight on the district.   We’ll be bringing you more of our Enviro-crime officer’s work. If you spot or witness flytipping, report it online at [www.blaby.gov.uk/flytipping](http://www.blaby.gov.uk/flytipping).  As part of a new van to our Neighbourhood Services fleet, we've also wrapped the van with our Flytipping message.  **Diwali Celebrations** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Diwali takes place on Saturday, and whilst the celebrations for families across the district won't be the same, virtual Diwali celebrations are taking place.  Leicester City Council, who usually organise one of the biggest and best Diwali celebrations outside of India, will be holding virtual celebrations at 7pm on 14 November. The [Visit Leicester website](https://www.visitleicester.info/whats-on/diwali-p704841) has more information. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Supporting the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable**  If you, or someone you know, is classed as clinically extremely vulnerable or is shielding and has no way of getting food and needs an emergency food parcel, Leicestershire County Council can help. You can call 0116 305 2499 for support.  We are still helping those who need help to access regular shopping and food supplies, support for loneliness and isolation and other help through our [Community Hub.](https://www.blaby.gov.uk/leisure-health-and-community/community/coronavirus-community-hub/) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Blaby Lottery**  The Blaby Lottery now has 50 local community groups registered. 60p from each ticket goes towards local good causes, and you can choose which local organisation you support.  You can also win one of five Amazon entertainment bundles given away across the country, including an Amazon Echo Show8, Echo Dot and Fire7 Tablet. Buy one or more tickets before the draw on Saturday 19 December to be in with a chance. The more tickets mean more chances to win!  [Play now](https://www.blabylottery.co.uk/) for the chance to support your local community and win a £25,000 weekly jackpot. | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **Furlough Extended**  The Government have announced a five-month extension of the furlough scheme into Spring 2021.  The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will now run until the end of March with employees receiving 80% of their current salary for hours not worked.  Support for the Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) will be increased, with the third grant covering November to January calculated at 80% of average trading profits, up to a maximum of £7,500.  [Find out more on the Government's website.](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-extends-furlough-to-march-and-increases-self-employed-support) | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | **PayPal fraud - Do you sell goods online?**  Do you sell good online? There have been more than 21,000 reports of fake PayPal phishing emails recorded by Action Fraud between January to September 2020, with a total reported loss of over £7.8 million  Online marketplace sellers have received a fake email that appears to be from PayPal, stating that the fraudster has made a payment for an item. Their ultimate aim is to get the seller to ship the item without verifying payment has been made.  Report suspicious emails to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk)**,**and sign up to Leicestershire Police's [Neighbourhood Link email](https://www.neighbourhoodlink.co.uk/) for the latest updates on scams | | | |